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SUBJECT: UNITED RUSSIA CANDIDATE WINS PETROZAVODSK MAYORALTY

REF: ST. PETERSBURG 75

[1](#)1. (SBU) United Russia candidate Nikolay Levin won, as expected, the July 5 mayoral election in Petrozavodsk with 59% of the vote, according to the Karelian Central Election Commission. After his main rival and previous opposition leader Davletkhan Alikhanov dropped out of the race in mid-June (reftel), Levin's victory was more or less assured as none of his remaining opponents in the election had widespread appeal among the electorate.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Of the other candidates in the race, Anatoliy Tyomnyshev of Right Cause led with 16% of the vote, followed by Liberal Democrat Natalya Buzova with 12%, and rounded out by independent Yevgeniy Mikheev with 6%. Several other minor candidates all garnered less than 3% in total.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Turnout for the special election was just 21%, continuing a declining trend over the past decade (voter turnout was 58% in 1998; 50% in 2002; and 36% in 2006). It is likely the turnout was especially low in this election because of the near certainty of the eventual outcome, as well as the fact that the election was held on a Sunday in "high dacha season," when many Russians were spending the weekend away from their homes.

GWALTNEY